



1027th meeting of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society

8:00PM Wednesday, October 24, 2001

Knights of Columbus Hall, 2800 Taraval St. at 38th Ave. San Francisco

Cable Car Tokens and Medals Jack Free and Michael Wehner



Pacific Coast Numismatic Society
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Our speakers this month are *Jack Free* and *Michael Wehner* who will be showing their collections of Cable Car Exonumia. Members are encouraged to bring along pieces from their own collections.

1026th Meeting September 2001

European Thalers- Joe Wargo (by *Herb Miles*)

Joe Wargo presented the membership with a fine talk on European Thalers, i.e., large size silver coins of medieval Europe. Joe noted that there were no circulating dollar size silver coins during Roman and early medieval times because of supply and demand. First there was no large mining operation in Europe until the 1400s and the small penny (denarius size) coins had a relatively large store of value until then.

After very large silver deposits were discovered in Bohemia, Prussia, large silver coins could be minted in quantity to satisfy the emerging noble or royal class of European. Dollar-size and larger silver coins could be used in land and business transactions for this new class of people. Denominated as “guldirers”, but called “jochimthals,” the common name was shortened eventually to “thaler.”

The first circulating dated thaler was from 1486, the Gulden-groschen of Archduke Sigismund of Tyrol, weighing about 31.93 grams with a fine silver weight of 29.91 (about 94% pure silver). Afterwards, officials determined that 29 grams of pure silver would be the standard weight with a fineness of .875.

In the 1500s more silver was discovered in Brunswick Germany accounting for the many thalers and multiple thalers issued by this province. An 8 thaler was about 91mm in diameter and a 12 was probably more than 100mm!

As Spain and other European countries exploited the “New World”, the abundance of silver there caused continual debasing of the thaler standard, from 27.4 grams of silver in 1524 to 25.95 during the years of 1551-1566. In 1667, the thaler was debased to 22.25 grams of silver and in 1690 the

new weight was lowered to 19.45 grams. Eventually the thaler was valued at 16.67 grams of silver and even later replaced by a 3 Mark coin.

Other countries followed in issuing large silver coins with a silver weight between 23-25 grams making trade and business between various countries convenient.

Joe then passed around several wonderful thalers to underscore his talk and give us an idea of the size of these magnificent coins.



A silver multiple thaler in the British Museum showing details of a mining operation. (Photo by M. Wehner)

CSNA/PCNS Educational Symposium

As you know, we have an excellent slate of speakers for our second educational symposium at Fort Mason, on Saturday, November 3, 10:00 AM. Please show your support for this type of activity by registering and attending. As a reminder, although registration is free, if you want a lunch, the cost is \$12.00. We will be collecting registrations at the October meeting.

Exhibits

Phil Nordin brought a whole case full of propaganda material (leaflets, patches, bogus paper money) from Operation Desert Storm, lest we forget what happened to our military personnel during our current crises.

Cal Rogers brought an interesting Chinese coin, a commemorative of their 50th year of the "Liberation of Tibet", and Cal gave a spirited, if disquieting assessment of China's actions against the Tibetan people during this Cultural Revolution time period.

Frank Strazzarino brought his Silver 40th year ANA membership pin.

Paul Holtzman exhibited two "beauties", A Bermuda \$2 with a long-tailed tropic bird and a Cyprus pound also depicting one of our feathered friends.

Gordon Donnell brought several items, a set of 3 San Francisco 1906 Earthquake medals, a set of silver and bronze Fairfield Coin Show medals, and a photo picturing him with *Randy L'Teton*, model for the Sacajawea dollar.

Michael Wehner brought his recent purchases from Speaker *Joe Wargo* including a Cornell Watch Co token with watch face on one side and "10th Industrial Fair of the Mechanic's Institute" on the other, a Joseph Brothers of Liverpool watch makers' token (from 149 Montgomery St), and a Seal Rock House/Good for 5 Cents token.

Elliot Wehner (in absentia) exhibited a very pretty encapsulated Maria Theresa Thaler.

Jerry Schimmel brought two Wells Fargo medals, the large bronze given to employees in 1977 and the silver 50th anniversary piece which was given to employees in 1902.

Mark Wm. Clark exhibited two nice older casino chips from the old Aladdin hotel and casino in Las Vegas, two relatively scarce \$1 and \$5 pieces.

Larry Reppeteau brought two Snelling death medals, one recently acquired from "Baldwin's" of London; only one more and the set is complete!

Stephen Huston brought his bronze Bavarian thaler, which had been holed and was being used as a fob. Steve noted that the detail on this cast piece was quite good, perhaps better than many struck thalers.

Herb Miles brought a number of items acquired in Boston, MA, a piece of hotel scrip from the "Parker House", an older Boston broken banknote, and an "Evacuation of Boston" bronze so-called dollar.

Dahlia Society of California Gilt Medal *Michael Wehner*



The dahlia, long regarded as the city flower of San Francisco, was officially recognized as such on October 4, 1926. This ancient and showy plant was discovered in central Mexico by the Spanish, who sent samples back to Madrid. There, in the late 1700's, the dahlia was given its name by an archbishop to honor Dr. Andreas Dahl, a Swedish botanist, who had studied them in the botanical gardens.

The Dahlia Society of California is still active, meeting monthly in San Francisco and sponsoring an annual Dahlia show at the San Francisco County Fair Building in the Golden Gate Park. This medal features a semi-nude figure overlooking a sunset over the Golden Gate. Her right arm is outstretched while her left arm bears a bouquet of dahlias. The reverse is inscribed to "J.W. Davies, Meritorious Exhibit Class B, 1919". This beautiful medal is gilt over copper.

Propaganda Leaflets of Operation Desert Storm *Phil and Sarah Nordin*

The military operations in the Persian Gulf in 1990 and 1991, called "Desert Shield" and "Desert Storm", included the use of propaganda leaflets by units on both sides of the conflict. Several varieties of leaflets used by Coalition forces have a numismatic connection, because the face was a color copy of an Iraqi 25 dinar note, Pick #73. The original note measures 176mm x 80mm, but the leaflets were printed slightly smaller, at 164mm x 73mm. The face designs of both the note and the leaflet feature a group of charging horsemen and a head-and-shoulders portrait of General Saddam Hussein facing left, in military uniform. The note is watermarked with a portrait of Hussein and carries a security thread, while the leaflet is printed on plain paper.

The back design of the original note carried an image of the city gates to Baghdad and a monument, while the back designs of the leaflet addressed the conflict. Several varieties of leaflets were printed as so-called "Safe Conduct Passes", and gave instructions on how to surrender to Coalition forces. Others carried cartoons that made fun of Saddam. One leaflet carried a mouth-watering description of the food rations served to Coalition forces, and included the statement, "*Prisoners are fed the same meals as Coalition soldiers*".

Iraqi leaflets used against Coalition forces were larger, typically measuring 200mm x 140mm. The Iraqi leaflets were printed on one side only. They typically addressed philosophical issues of the conflict, such as whether the risks of war are worth the outcome. Few Iraqi leaflets appear to have been actually used against Coalition forces. On the other hand, Coalition troops reported that many surrendering Iraqi soldiers had dinar-faced leaflets in their possession.



Desert Storm Propaganda note (photo by P.Nordin)

RAFFLE

Four prizes went to:

Hibbler Kappen 403 so-called dollar with headless winged Liberty advancing through the Panama Canal on a ship, in silvered bronze was won by *Jerry Schimmel*.

Large Size Silver Coins of the World, by John Davenport went to *Paul Holtzman*.

A Silver bracelet made from Maria Theresa Thalers and a regular Maria Theresa thaler went to *Michael Wehner*

A propaganda note from the Desert Storm conflict donated by *Phil Nordin* went to *Ron Johnson*.

New email address

Please note, due to the intermittent failure of the internet service provider, the email address pcns@mypad.com should be replaced with mfwehner@yahoo.com